



ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان
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Report by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights of UPR on Ethiopia

Submitted to: OHCHR to complete the requirements of the report submitted by Ethiopia to UPR as a mechanism of HRC in Geneva.

Submitted by: Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights (consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council).

Submitted on: Ethiopia.

Date: August 2018

Preface

Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights (Egypt) presents this report to illustrate and track the human rights situation in Ethiopia and to monitor the most important positive and negative changes related to it. Maat has analyzed the documents and results of Ethiopia's submission to UPR at its second session in 2014. Maat has also compiled and classified available information on the human rights situation, as well as communicating with a number of stakeholders for the preparation of this report.

Maat has taken into account the actions taken by Ethiopia to improve the human rights situation and to address the challenges that affect its ability to promote and protect human rights, particularly during the accelerating events and developments in the Horn of Africa. Maat also took into account the internal changes and disturbances that led to a change in political leadership and the ensuing decisions that would calm the situation and change the political and human rights situation. It is perhaps a temporary solution for Ethiopia, which is looking for further political, economic, social and human rights improvements.

Ethiopia has undergone many changes over the past four years before and after the change of the Ethiopian government. Following the resignation of the former Prime Minister "Dessalines", on the backdrop of major protests, and "Abe Ahmed" taking his place, with reformist visions, the most important of these changes have been:

المنظمة حاصلة على المركز الاستشاري الخاص في المجلس الاقتصادي والاجتماعي منذ 2016

Organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 2016

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Counter-terrorism

Ethiopia's commitment in the second cycle of its UPR to 8 recommendations on counter-terrorism measures. Ethiopia fully respects human rights laws and standards and does not unduly impose restrictions on the fundamental freedoms such as freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and the space allocated to civil society.

However, the government used its 2009 anti-terrorism proclamation as a pretext for suppressing journalists, restricting independent media and arresting activists and human rights defenders. Hundreds of people have been detained for more than four months, the maximum period of pretrial detention permitted by law. ⁽¹⁾

As a positive development, the new head of government held talks in 2018 with opposition groups to amend the provisions of the Anti-terrorism proclamation, whose critics say it criminalizes dissent. The government met with 14 political parties, including the ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front party. ⁽²⁾ On July 5, 2018, the parliament passed a government bill to lift the internally armed opposition movements from the terror list, as a sign of the implementation of these amendments. ⁽³⁾

Cancellation of state of emergency

The state of emergency proclaimed in October 2016 led to mass arrests, ill-treatment in detention and restrictions on freedom of assembly and association, while the state of emergency was arbitrary and indefinite. During the state of emergency, the armed forces deployed much larger numbers throughout, detaining protesters in the Oromia and Amhara areas, and dealing arbitrarily with more than 21,000 people in the "rehabilitation camps", according to government figures. ⁽⁴⁾ Under the state of emergency, more than 11,000 people were arrested and detained without being allowed access to their lawyers, families or a judge. ⁽⁵⁾

The situation changed on June 5, 2018, when the Ethiopian Parliament voted by a majority in favor of lifting the state of emergency. Last March, the Ethiopian Parliament announced the extension of the state of emergency after it was imposed in the country since 8 October 2016. ⁽⁶⁾

Termination of the conflict situation with neighboring States

On July 9, 2018, Prime Minister Abe Ahmed signed a "joint declaration of Peace and Cooperation" in Asmara, the capital of Eritrea. This declaration ends two decades of war between the two countries. The declaration also ends the military confrontation that followed a border war between 1998 and 2000, which is believed to have claimed the lives of 80,000 people. It also caused the travel and

¹ According to Amnesty International in the annual report 2017.

² Reuters Website: <https://goo.gl/67M1Sd>

³ Anatolia Agency: <https://goo.gl/pyKgnM>

⁴ Human Rights Watch .January 2018

⁵ According to Amnesty International's report.2017-2016

⁶ Aljazeera website: <https://goo.gl/UdXreL>

movement to be disrupted, which affected many families and kept them away from their relatives all those years.⁽⁷⁾

Women's Rights

Ethiopia has committed to about 30 recommendations in its pledges since the previous round in 2014. To increase efforts to promote women's access to employment and their participation in public affairs. To increase the resources allocated to address violence against women and female genital mutilation. Programmes to combat violence against women were also developed.

The Penal Code criminalizes the practice of genital mutilation. The Penal Code provides for three months ' imprisonment or a fine of not less than (\$22) for convicted offenders and is punishable by imprisonment for a term of five to ten years for the conviction. According to government sources, there had never been a criminal charge of FGM, but the media reported that the implementation of that law was limited. While there has been a notable development in the empowerment of women in official positions when Ms. "Mafrat Kamel " assumed the position of Speaker of the new Parliament,⁽⁸⁾ while women's representation in the federal Parliament is 32% of the seats in 2015⁽⁹⁾.

Civil and Political Rights

Ethiopia has committed to nearly 21 recommendations for measures to ensure civil and political rights. Among these rights are freedom of expression, association, and assembly. These recommendations are in full conformity with the provisions of article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, especially by providing a mechanism for defending the truth in all defamation cases, and by ensuring that journalists practice their profession in a free environment. The protection of members of opposition groups, political activists and journalists are fully protected from arbitrary detention.

1. **Freedom of expression:** Despite these undertakings, the State has, during the previous years, taken strict control of the media, which has aggravated during the state of emergency, making it difficult for Ethiopians to access independent information about government perspectives, and forced many journalists to choose between self-censorship or harassment and arrest or exile. A number of human rights defenders, civilians, Muslim protesters, as well as opposition political parties were harassed, and a state of emergency was used to impose further restrictions on freedom of expression, including blocking the internet and means of communication⁽¹⁰⁾.
2. **Freedom of Assembly** The police used excessive force to disperse a peaceful demonstration in Addis Ababa, organized by the opposition party, "Unity for Democracy and Justice". The police beat protesters with batons and sticks, injuring more than 20 of them. The government has called for a march in Mekel Square to condemn the killing of Ethiopian immigrants in Libya. When some demonstrators chanted slogans during the protest, the police used excessive force against them, including tear gas and beatings, to disperse the crowd. Of which led to the situation evolving into confrontations between demonstrators and police. Hence, a journalist

⁷ My website, Sky News, and the Arab Westbotnik, <https://goo.gl/22o9E2> , <https://goo.gl/SsanmG>

⁸ Newspaper "El Masry El-youm ": <https://goo.gl/mNmAV5>

⁹ Posted on the following link: <https://goo.gl/HqxeU4>

¹⁰ Amnesty International report 2016 – 2017.

reported that 48 people were injured, some were arrested and charged with inciting violence during the march.⁽¹¹⁾

3. **The release of Prisoners:** The authorities used torture to force detainees to confess and to sign statements and evidence criminalizing other people, and the list of victims of torture included prisoners of conscience who had been arrested for expressing their actual opposition⁽¹²⁾. In the Al-Amhra area, detainees in "Finote Selam" prison were also reported that prison staff beat, tortured, and drowned some of them in latrine pits.
4. **Association:** The Charities and Foundations Act No. 621/2009, which is contrary to the Ethiopian Constitution and international human rights standards and obligations, was promulgated. The Foundations and Charities Act places funding restrictions and other restrictions on human rights organizations, and the violation of that law has become a criminal charge. Since 2011, the law has been used to freeze the assets of more than 1 million US dollars belonging to 2 of the country's major human rights organizations: the Human Rights Council and the Ethiopian Women Lawyers ' syndicate⁽¹³⁾.

As a positive development with regard to civil and political rights in general. Ethiopia has released thousands of dissidents since January 2018 as part of reforms that the government pledged in the aftermath of violent unrest, which erupted some three years ago, with more than 1,000 prisoners released. On 30 May 2018, the Ethiopian authorities released 576 political prisoners in a process of national reconciliation. The authorities also acquitted two of the most prominent opponents abroad: the head of the movement "May 7" Berhanu Picky, and the director of the media network "Aroma" Jawhar Mohammed. On the other hand, on May 18, 2018, in light of Abe Ahmed's visit to Saudi Arabia, the kingdom released more than 1,000 Ethiopians from the kingdom's jails. On 19 May 2018, on the sidelines of his visit to the Emirate of Dubai, the UAE authorities released dozens of Ethiopian prisoners.

Rights of the Child

The Ethiopian authorities neglected to provide adequate protection to the inhabitants of the Gambella region, in the face of repeated armed attacks by the Murle ethnic group, during which hundreds of children were abducted. On the night of April 15, 2017, they attacked 13 villages of "Nuer" in Jammu and Raara districts of Gambella, killing 208 people and abducting 159 children. By June, Ethiopian troops were able to rescue 91 abducted children.⁽¹⁴⁾ However, the order was subsequently repeated when they abducted 22 children from the "Anwa" group.⁽¹⁵⁾

Combating human trafficking

It is assumed that Ethiopia is committed to five commitments to further strengthen the mechanisms adopted to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and to promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of human trafficking. In 2015, the Government enacted a

¹¹ According to Amnesty International report 2015 – 2016.

¹² According to the Amnesty International report.2015 – 2014

¹³ Amnesty International, Public Statement, Ethiopia: 25 Years of Human Rights Violations, 2 June 2016, AI INDEX: AFR 25/4178/2016, p.p. 2-3.

¹⁴ Amnesty International report2017-2016 ,

¹⁵ Amnesty International report.2018 – 2017

comprehensive reform of the anti-trafficking Penal Code, which provides for harsh penalties amounting to life imprisonment and a fine of (\$22,197) to condemn human trafficking and exploitation, including enslavement, debt bondage, and forced prostitution.

Recommendations

- Activating the new amendments agreed upon with the opposition in connection with the Declaration on Combating terrorism, so as to ensure that it is not used as a pretext to suppress the freedoms of opinion, expression, peaceful assembly or forced arrest .
- Effective application of the articles of the Penal Code concerning harmful practices against Ethiopian women in all their forms, from circumcision to domestic violence, to violations that may occur during arbitrary arrests.
- Reducing the implementation or reference of the emergency law in periods of advocacy for peaceful gatherings, and reducing unreasonable restrictions on freedom of assembly and association. When the emergency law is imposed, it must be of limited duration.
- Freedom from a state's restriction on the freedoms of expression in the press, the media, and social media, and the cessation of security prosecutions of activists, journalists, and media professionals.
- Conducting serious investigations into the use of torture in prisons in previous periods and compensating those affected, as well as inspecting prisons and ascertaining the extent to which they are human and competent as a tool for reform rather than for the production of new extremists.
- Providing a safe environment for children against abduction and displacement, providing them with protection and health care, and applying deterrent penalties to child labor at a certain age.
- Activating the Penal Code against trafficking in human beings and seeking to stop the migration routes that expose Ethiopians to the dangers of human traffickers.
- Continuing to cooperate with the United Nations and other international organizations to overcome the constraints and challenges of improving human rights situations.